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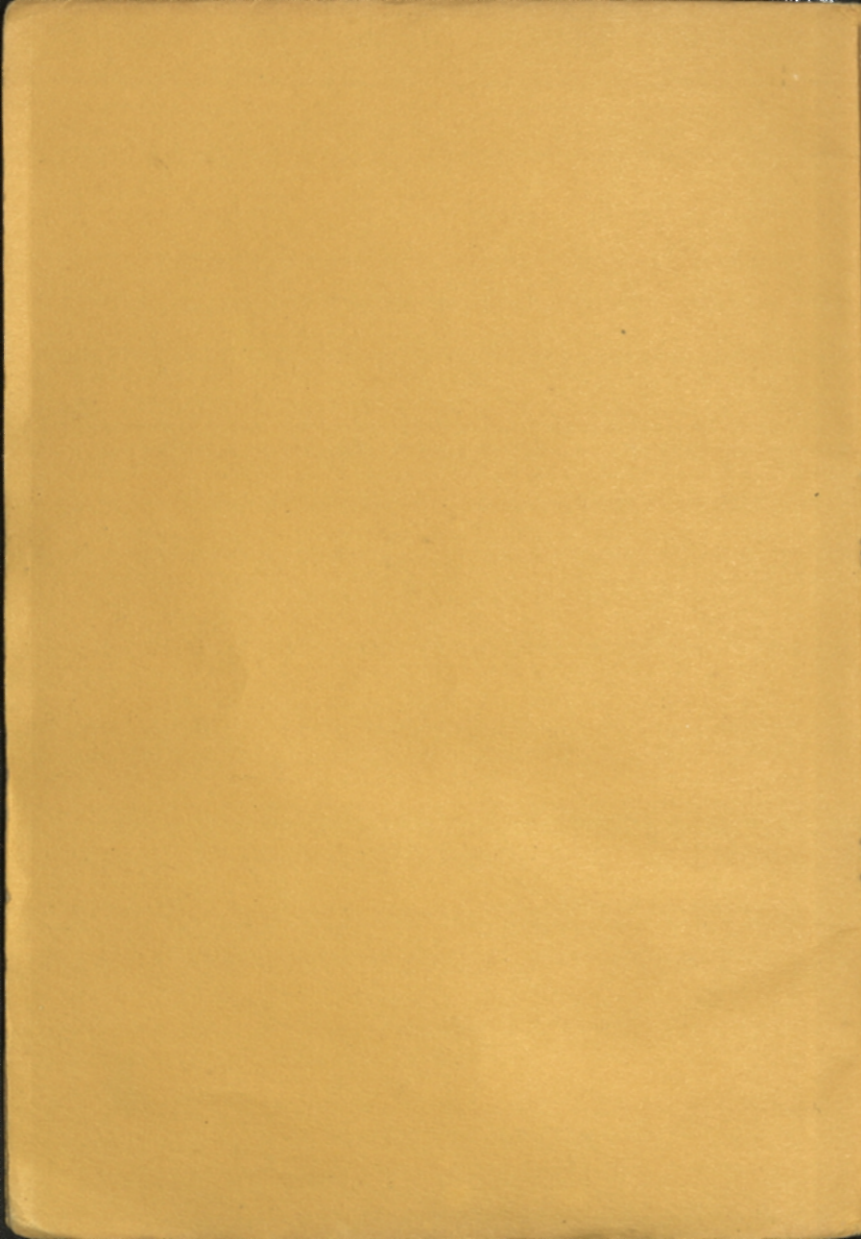
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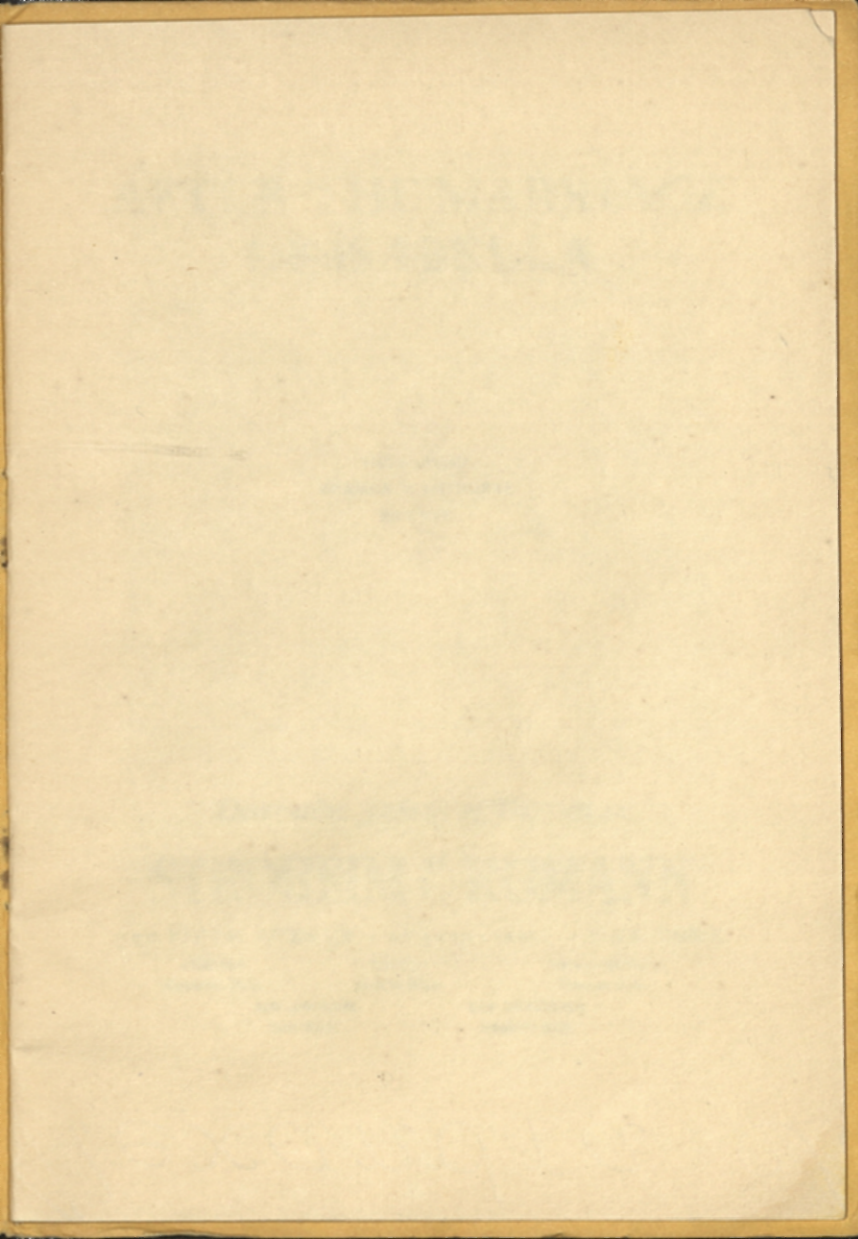
After the Marriage of Isabella



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AFTER THE MARRIAGE OF ISABELLA



Decorative Fabrics of Distinction

STROHEIM & ROMANN

730 FIFTH AVENUE • AT 57TH STREET • NEW YORK

CHICAGO

Hayworth Bldg.

BOSTON

Berkeley Bldg.

PHILADELPHIA

Finance Bldg.

LOS ANGELES

Story Bldg.

SAN FRANCISCO

Jeweler's Bldg.



Spanish appliqué design of the 16th century. Coats of arms are especially typical of Spanish decoration. The Castle and the Lion were Isabella's coat of arms and represent Castile and Leon.

WITH the marriage of Isabella of Castile and Leon, and Ferdinand of Aragon, the rival provinces of Spain were united for the first time, and Spain entered upon the most prosperous era of her national life.

GRANADA, the last stronghold of the Moors, whose mints "coined no longer gold, but steel", fell to the Catholic Kings in 1492. The same year, in searching for a shorter route to the East Indies, Columbus discovered a new continent instead, and brought back ingots of gold and natives to prove his assertion. The confidence of the queen, who had declared her willingness to pawn her jewels, if necessary, to aid the daring navigator, had been fully justified.

PROMISES of wealth far exceeding the fabled treasures of the East Indies, stirred the imagination of the Spanish people, and stimulated them to a new enjoyment of luxury. The boastfully economical Isabella, herself, was not un-

touched by this new display of magnificence. She loved to be surrounded by a numerous suite, and her costumes were notoriously sumptuous. The King, too, increased in grandeur, and the tendency to elaborate ceremonial, which is usually ascribed to Burgundian influence, had begun.

SIMULTANEOUSLY with this sudden influx of wealth and desire for luxurious living, came a revival of the industrial arts. The special charm of these arts lay in their blending of the western, European or Christian art, with the eastern, African or Moorish. The Moors, who had first been invited into Spain at the beginning of the Eighth Century to aid the family of Alaric in its dispute for the throne, had dominated the Art of Spain for many centuries. As workmen, they were much more skilled than



*Moorish textile pattern from Granada, 15th Century.
Striped fabrics with bands of Arabic inscriptions and
arabesque ornament are typical of Moorish ornament.*

the Spanish Christians, and in the amalgamation of the two elements, the Moorish usually proved the stronger.

THE silks of the so-called Modéjar style, the style of the politically but spiritually unconquered Moor, were fairly constant in their design during the centuries of Moorish domination. Characteristic of the Hispano-Moresque

damasks and brocades were the parallel bands, alternating with bands of Arabic inscriptions, and geometric forms and designs reminiscent of the intricacies of the Alhambra, or of the ramifications of a Moorish town, which seemed themselves like gigantic arabesques. To these patterns, Christian Spain supplied her own taste in accessories, prominent among which were various coats of arms, which included the lions of Leon, and the castles of Castile. Spain, more than any other country, favored these heraldic devices.

FIFTY YEARS after the expulsion of the Moors from Granada, the Moorish influence was gradually being pushed aside by the Italian. The perfected forms of the Italian Renaissance, however, lost their purity and became clumsier. Flower forms became less naturalistic and there was a tendency to graft heavy details upon

slender stems, thus destroying the feeling of equilibrium. The supple and graceful curves of the Italian ornament were broken up into a series of polygonal shapes.

THE most favored fabric of this period was a gold brocade, with a very large pomegranate motif, the heart of which was surrounded by leaves of arabesques. At the same time, the richly colored Moorish silks were continued in similarly colored Renaissance tissues.

THE entire scheme of Moorish interior decoration had been built up on a harmony of blue, red and gold, and to this scheme Spain always adhered. Her fabrics were heavy with the precious metal. It was woven into the tapestries of Charles V, which still are the glory of the Spanish crown. No other country dared weave so much of its national wealth into its fabrics.

After the MARRIAGE of ISABELLA

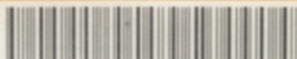


Textile pattern of the time of the "Catholic Kings", Isabella and Ferdinand. Coats of arms of Castile, Leon, Aragon, Sicily and Granada are arranged in ogival framework.

IT is a curious fact that the production and consumption of Spanish silks was limited to her own territory. Her fabrics were reserved for the magnificent, dignified, and still slightly ascetic interiors which were concealed behind the simple, reserved and almost repellent exteriors of her palaces.

AT the end of the Sixteenth Century, the weaving of fabrics shared the fate of every other industry. Spain, who had counted herself the richest country in the world, forfeited her future because of her incapacity for successful organization of her new acquisitions.

THE rich colorings characteristic of Spanish textiles have been used in many fabrics in the Stroheim and Romann collection. Spanish influence has not been confined alone to the fine pieces, but is strongly perceptible in the Sunfast group.



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